JAN - APRIL 2016

MEMORY/HISTORY AND RECONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITIES

COURSE #: 9214A

OUTLINE

WEDNESDAYS 9:30 - 12:30 am
SSC 3227

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Office Hours: TBA

Dr. Randa Farah 9214 September-December 2013
This course engages contemporary debates on history/memory and identity, three concepts that are dynamically interlinked. The literature on memory/history and its twin forgetting on the one hand, and identity on the other is vast: it crosses disciplinary boundaries and scholarly areas of interest. Thus, the theories, methods and questions raised are eclectic and useful for students of diverse backgrounds and interests. In this course, we focus on the political, social and cultural aspects of memory and less on the psychological or biological dimensions. The surge in memory/identity studies is attributed to different reasons. Nora, for example, suggested we are obsessed with memory, because little of it is left. Others link our interest in identity- and by implication memory - to the postmodern turn and the deconstruction of meta-narratives: in this explanation, History gave way to ‘fragmented’ identities and histories. The relationship between history and memory has been a topic of scholarly debates. Older theories (e.g. Halbwachs and Nora) distinguished between memory and history, where the latter was assumed to be factual and objective as opposed to the former conceived as more subjective. Critics suggested that the boundaries between the two are porous since all past constructions are mediated by subjects. Anthropologists in particular contributed significantly to memory and/or identity studies: they paid attention to non-elite reproductions of the past and ‘gave voice’ to those absent in hegemonic discourses and narratives; anthropologists are interested in how ordinary people draw on the past to represent their identities as individuals and/or as collective groups. The course is interactive and organized around themes, which nonetheless overlap. As much as possible, the readings take into consideration the students’ academic interests and areas of research. Although the course does not cover psychological approaches, and it does not purport to cover all aspects of history, memory and identity, it provides students with a good grasp of the major debates, including memory and place/landscape, oral history, memory and violence/trauma.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Identify some of the theoretical approaches and debates on the topic.
- Analyze conceptually the relationship between history/memory and identity.
- Explain some of the conceptual problems pertaining to memory, history, identity.
- Analyze the aforementioned concepts as gendered and as related to power.
- Examine critically some of the writings and case studies on memory/history and identity.
- Provide critical interpretations on how memory/history and identity overlap with other concepts such as space and place, forgetting, trauma and violence.
- Analyze the relationship between state power and the production of history.

Each student will present on only some of readings during the semester, the number of readings will depend on the final number of students enrolled (so far perhaps around a total of 4 to 5 readings for the whole term). Nonetheless, it is expected that all students will read weekly assignments, or as many as possible to allow for useful discussions in class. During the first class, we might modify or change some of them. If you have an article that you think is useful to
your area of research and related to themes in the course, please let me know, we might add it to the existing readings, or substitute with another.

**WEEK 1  Jan 6  Introductions**

**WEEK 2  Jan 13 Relevant Theoretical Questions and Approaches**


**WEEK 3 Jan 20 Relevant Theoretical Questions and Approaches**


**WEEK 4  Jan 27 Historical Memory, the Nation-State and Nationalism**


WEEK 5  Feb 3 Indigenous Struggles, Memory and the Nation-State


WEEK 6  Feb 10 Space, Place, Landscapes and Identity


WEEK 7  Feb 17  Reading Week

WEEK 8  Feb 24  Colonial and Postcolonial: Questions of History/Memory and Identity


WEEK 9  March 2 Remembering, Forgetting and Silencing


WEEK 9  March 2 Memory, Trauma and Testimony


**WEEK 10 March 9 Below and Beyond National Belonging**


2. Hirschkind, Charles. 2011. What is Political Islam? Middle East Research # 205 at:  
http://www.merip.org/mer/mer205/what-political-islam


**WEEK 11 March 16 Oral History, Memory, Identity**


3. Diemberger, Hildegard 2010 Life histories of forgotten heroes? transgression of boundaries and the reconstruction of Tibet in the post-Mao era. Inner Asia

**WEEK 12** March 23 Memory, Identity, Gender and generation


**WEEK 13** March 30 Memorials, Murals, Museums and Monuments


**WEEK 14** March 6 Review

**Assignments, Evaluations, Dates**

- Oral Presentations and Discussion: **40%**
- Short paper on your research and class themes: **20%**
- Term Paper: **40%**
Participation, Presentations and Discussion: 40%  The success of the course depends on your attendance, full active participation and contribution to class discussions. Please make an extra effort not to miss classes as this will affect discussions. Make sure you read the articles even if it is not your turn to present, although sometimes students are unable to read all, do your best to read as many as possible. Each student is expected to present and/or participate in class discussions on a weekly basis. Readings will be distributed so that each student has the same number of presentations as all others during the term. Presentations should include a brief summary followed by the student’s critical assessment of the article or chapter, and at least two questions for the class to debate. Please prepare a one page written summary (very brief) of your presentation including the questions to distribute at the beginning of class. The dates and number of presentations will be assigned to each on the first day of class.

Short Paper: Write a 4-5 page paper (double spaced) on your area of interest and link it to relevant themes we discussed in class and in the readings. In other words, the short paper discusses areas we covered- whether theoretical or particular case studies - that are useful and converge with your own research and/or interests.

Term Paper: Choose a topic related to the course and ideally one that is related to your area of interest or research. It is always wise not to leave the essay to the last week, so begin thinking and writing early on. (10 - 12 pages double-spaced).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Accessibility at Western

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

Western’s commitment to Accessibility, visit: http://wss.uwo.ca/Student%20Services%20Organizational%20Units/Accessibility%20at%20Western/index.html

Student Development Services http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssl/ has staff members who specialize in assisting students with various disabilities to adjust to the university environment. These disabilities include, but are not limited to, vision, hearing and mobility impairments, learning disabilities, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders. Students who require special accommodations for disabilities should make a formal request through Student Development Services as early in the semester as possible.
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Plagiarism and Scholastic Offences**
Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. **Plagiarism is a major academic offense.**

**Written work**
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently in place between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

**Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams** may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.
Evidence of suspected plagiarism will be reported to the Department Chair, who will give the student an opportunity to respond to the allegation. Where a determination of plagiarism has been made, the Chair shall assess appropriate penalties up to and including a zero on the assignment and failure in the course. The case will be reported to the Dean, who may assess additional penalties.

**Accommodation for Medical Illness**

In all cases where accommodation is being sought for work totaling 10% or more of the final grade, students should go to their Faculty Academic Counseling, and not to the instructor, from where it will be determined if accommodation is warranted and to acquire the appropriate paper work. Please see the following link of Western’s Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

If you fail to submit an assignment worth less than 10% of the final grade, you need to come and see me.

If you miss the mid-term or the exam or fail to submit any assignment worth more than 10% without a legitimate cause (accommodation not granted by Academic Counseling) you will get a zero. If Academic Counseling provides approval for accommodation it is your responsibility to contact the TAs to find out the dates and times for make-up exams, and contact me for the new submission date of your essay.

**Late Assignments**

Please note 2% of your grade for a particular assignment will be deducted for each day you are late, including the essay, no essay will be accepted 5 days after the last class.

**Website**

The syllabus, lecture outlines, important announcements, other relevant information and grades will be posted on the class website. Brief lecture outlines will be posted after class. You may download these on your computer, but you are not allowed to make these public or download onto other websites. It is your responsibility to daily check the website.

**Emailing instructor and TAs**

Please do not email the teaching team on weekends unless it is an urgent issue. You should use office hours if you have questions or need guidance. We all have different hours which will allow you to see at least one of us during a given week.

**Laptops and other electronic devices**
You are allowed to use laptops to take notes in class, but nothing else. **Turn OFF** your cell phones and all electronic devices while in class. **You are NOT allowed to tape-record or video anything during class.** No electronic devices are allowed during exams.

**Helpful Websites**

Registrar: http://www.registrar.uwo.ca

Student Support Services: http://westernusc.ca/services/

Anthropology Undergraduate Chair: Prof. Sherrie Larkin, SSC 3328, Phone: 519-661-2111 x85084

Department Chair: Prof. Kim Clark, SSC 3323, Dept. Phone: 519-661-3430

Anthropology website: http://anthropology.uwo.ca/about.html

**ENJOY THE COURSE AND BEST OF LUCK!**